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MEMORANDUM

TO: Supervisors of Special Education
LEA Gifted Coordinators

FROM: Ann Sanders, Director of Assessment, Information, and Research
Mike Copas, Gifted Coordinator

DATE: April 25, 2005

SUBJECT: 2005-2006 Guidelines for Appropriate Use of Gifted Assessment Tools

In the 2003-2004 school year, House Joint Resolution 75 (HJR 75) directed the formation of a Joint Study Committee to examine and make recommendations for changes in State Board of Education rules and regulations for Intellectually Gifted students. The Joint Study Committee met throughout the fall of 2003, and the final report was submitted and approved by the State Board of Education in January 2004. This report may be reviewed in its entirety on the web at http://www.state.tn.us/sbe/pol_res_paper.html under the title of Intellectually Gifted Students Joint Study Committee Report (January 2004).

This memorandum is in response to the Joint Study Committee Recommendation 1.1 (item 1):

- 1) *revise or replace the Teacher Observation Checklist and the Teacher Creative Thinking Checklist;*
- 2) establish criteria for preschool identification and determination of need;
- 3) determine the guidelines as to the most appropriate grade levels for screening for intellectually gifted while allowing for flexibility for testing at an age appropriate for a given student;
- 4) develop a clear "adversely affects" standard which is appropriate to intellectually gifted students and their needs; and
- 5) review the eligibility criteria in relation to the use of a variety of intelligence tests, their new norms, and their uses to identify subpopulations of gifted students including highly gifted, minority gifted, and gifted with dual diagnoses.

An Intellectually Gifted (IG) Task Force was assembled, began on September 22, 2004, and has continued to meet throughout the 2004-2005 school year. Revisions and clarifications to the Gifted Criteria as recommended above will be piloted in several LEAs in the 2005-2006 school year. Final recommendations and changes relative to the Joint Study Committee Report will be released by the Department in the spring of 2006 with an expanded "Best Practices" Manual available for training.

Many of you are aware of the difficulties encountered in the use of the *Teacher's Observation Checklist (TOC)* and *Creative Thinking Checklist (CTCI)* for identifying students who are Intellectually Gifted. Due to the lack of standardization of the *TOC* and *CTCI* these documents will not be used for identification purposes in the 2006-2007 school year. In the 2005-2006 school year the following guidelines must be used:

When the Teacher's Observation Checklist and/or the Creative Thinking Checklist exclude a child from eligibility for gifted identification (i.e., the student is eligible in other component areas indicating giftedness), assessment teams must use a standardized measure in conjunction with additional assessment data to evaluate Academic Performance or Creative Thinking Skills.

A listing of gifted instruments can be found on the web (<http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/seassessment.htm#DISABILITY>) in the *Intellectually Gifted Manual* beginning on page 46 (Appendix A). In addition to current guidelines, there are several new or revised instruments available for assessment of these areas. The following may be used as guidance for the 2005-2006 school year. Although the entire assessment battery must be administered, subtest scores measuring either Academic Performance or Creative Thinking Skills should be examined in conjunction with observations and/or additional assessment information when determining eligibility. Examples of supporting information may include: analysis of work samples or products; three or more written samples from teachers and/or parents; student, peer, teacher, and/or parent interviews; or documentation of need for services in the area being measured. In all cases, professional judgment should be exercised by the assessment team when evaluating a student for eligibility as Intellectually Gifted.

Assessment measurements and instruments currently available for the evaluation of Academic Performance and Creative Thinking Component areas are listed below.

Academic Performance

- Grade Point Average (Middle and High School)
- The *Gifted Evaluation Scales-2 (GES-2)*¹
- *Gifted Rating Scales (GRS)*²
- *Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES)*³
- Academic Awards
- *Supplemental Performance Checklist* – as an Alternative Assessment Selection only.

¹Hawthorne

²Harcourt Assessment (formerly Psychological Corporation)

³Pro-Ed

Creative Thinking Skills

- *Torrance Tests of Creativity Thinking – Figural TTCT: Thinking Creatively with Pictures*¹
- *Torrance Tests of Creativity Thinking – Verbal TTCT: Thinking Creatively with Words*¹
- *Williams Scale of Divergent Thinking Evaluation of Products – Creativity Assessment Packet (CAP)*²
- The *Gifted Evaluation Scales-2 (GES-2)*³
- *Gifted Rating Scales (GRS)*⁴
- *Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES)*²
- *Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS)*. Also known as *Renzulli-Hartman Scales*⁵
- Evaluation of Product
- Evaluation of Product with Mentor Guidance – as an Alternative Assessment Selection only

¹Scholastic Testing Services

²Pro-Ed

³Hawthorne

⁴Harcourt Assessment (formerly Psychological Corporation)

⁵Creative Learning

cc: Joseph E. Fisher, Assistant Commissioner of Special Education
Debra E. Owens, Deputy Director, State Board of Education
Kim Karesh, Public Information Officer, Department of Education
Gifted Task Force Members